

PROJECT HELP PROGRAM

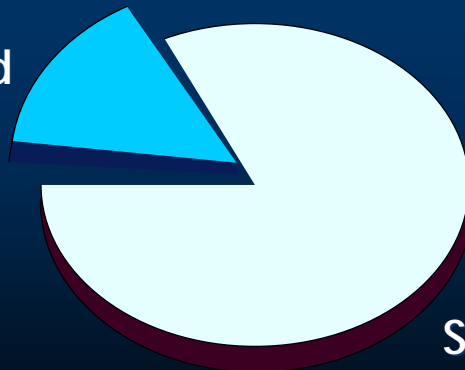
A cooperative effort between:

- Washington State Labor Council
- Washington State Business Community
- Washington State Department of Labor and Industries



INDUSTRIAL INSURANCE COVERAGE

Self-Insured
36%



State Fund
64%

Claim Resolution

- Project Help provides assistance and counseling to workers and employers regarding entitlements under Title 51.
- Our goal is to resolve this issue at the lowest level possible and avoid unnecessary litigation.
- We assist injured workers in every phase of the process, from initial claim filing to claim closure.
- Does not include the BIIA.

Project Help Contract

- The program is funded by a client services contract with the Department of Labor and Industries (LNI).
- We assist State Fund and Self-Insured workers (union and non-union).
- CLAIM INQUIRES ARE CONSIDERED A PRIORITY.
- Access to Citrix. Opens external access to the Department's claim files.

Services Are Free

- All services free of charge. Workers and Employers contact us on the toll free line.
- We log claim inquiries on r-log and email claim managers on Outlook. The Supervisor is copied on emails.
- We may call the claim manager directly to resolve the issue over the phone.
- We keep our own internal files.

Marketing of Services

How we market our services:

- Brochures.
- Educational programs.
- Word of mouth.
- Providers, claim managers, employers.
- LNI Website – very difficult to find us!
- We do not have our own website (yet).

Staffing Levels

- Program started in 1990 with two full-time staff.
- Today – we still have two full-time staff.
- For any program, like this, to succeed it needs to be properly funded and staffed.

No Political Activity

- We stay out of politics!
- We do not lobby.
- We do not get involved in legislation.
- We do not share confidential claim information with any stakeholders unless they are directly involved in the claim.

Reporting Requirements

- Monthly reports to LNI regarding claim activities, workshops, & presentations.
- Meet quarterly with Standing Committee comprised of labor, management, and Department representatives.
- Minutes of quarterly meetings.
- Year end reports and claim data logs.

Collaboration

How can we assist in resolving the issue?
What does the worker need to provide to the Department to get their issue resolved? What does the claim manager need from the AP?



Confidentiality

Any information concerning L&I, injured workers or claim inquiries is considered highly confidential.

Claim information and data is shared only with the Department.



Education

- We offer trainings and educational programs on how the system works.
- Department representatives participate in all trainings and educational programs.
- Yearly Workers' Compensation Conference for labor and management representatives.



Injured Workers' Rights

Injured workers often don't know what their rights are or what they need to do next.

- Claim filing. Injury versus occupational disease?
- Medical Care, Voc Rehabilitation, IME's.
- Reasonable expectations of what the system offers and what it doesn't offer.
- We don't represent workers – we empower them with accurate and timely information.

Issue Based Resolution

- We keep injured workers focused.
- They trust us – we have immediate credibility.
- Patient listener.
- Track data on the claim issue, resolution and outcome.
- Validate what workers have already been told.

Attorneys

- In Washington State - Attorneys charge up to third of worker's benefits.
- They won't take claims that have no financial compensation.
- Litigation drives up claim costs and can create financial hardship for all parties.

Injured Workers' Responsibilities

- Respond to requests for information timely:
 - Prior medical
 - Current attending physician
 - Correct contact information
 - Work History

Timely Communication

- Delay creates problems in the system.
- Our goal is to expedite resolution to claim issues.
- We review claim files looking for information that supports the workers contention for benefits.

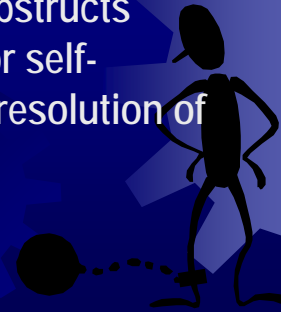
PROTESTS

- Any party affected may protest a decision or action they disagree with by sending a written protest to L&I within 60 days of receiving the notice of decision.
- Some workers are uncomfortable with writing protest letters - we can assist them. Workers don't need an attorney to protest a decision they disagree with.

Non-cooperation

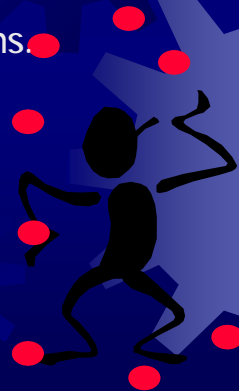
What is non-cooperation?

Non-cooperation is behavior by the worker, or their representative, which obstructs and/or delays the department, or self-insurer, from reaching a timely resolution of the claim.



What Do We Expect From Claim Managers?

- Timely response to our inquiry.
- Good communication. What's the plan?
- Let us know if you see other problems.
- Expedite resolution – avoid delay.





Things To Consider

- Don't recommend the legislative route. In Washington, 2007 session passed SB5053.
- Legislation effective 7/22/07.
- Ombudsman legislation has become very political and divisive.
- Created a lot of conflict – oversight, powers of the Ombudsman office, and data collection.



Best of Intentions – SB5053

- Governor Appointment (6 years). Duties include a yearly report to the Governor on system deficiencies.
- The Ombudsman reports to Director of the Department.
- Ombudsman position advocates for workers employed by self-insured companies.
- Legislation addresses only self-insured workers.